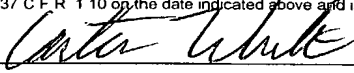



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JC10 Rec'd PCT/PTO 15 MAR 2002

FORM PTO-1390 DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE (REV 1-98)		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO 13485 0004 NPUS00
<b>TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371</b>		U.S. APPLICATION NO (If known, see 37 CFR 1.51) <b>10/088292</b>
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/GB00/03635 ✓	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE 22 September 2000 (22.09 2000) ✓	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED 24 September 1999 (24.09.1999) ✓
TITLE OF INVENTION DEVICE FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED HOUSING OF A PLANAR OPTICAL COMPONENT ✓		
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US FREEMAN, Neville, John; CROSS, Graham ✓		
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a <b>FIRST</b> submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</li> <li>2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a <b>SECOND</b> or <b>SUBSEQUENT</b> submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</li> <li>3. <input type="checkbox"/> This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).</li> <li>4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.</li> <li>5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <input type="checkbox"/> is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).</li> <li>b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> has been transmitted by the International Bureau.</li> <li>c. <input type="checkbox"/> is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).</li> <li>7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <input type="checkbox"/> are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).</li> <li>b. <input type="checkbox"/> have been transmitted by the International Bureau.</li> <li>c. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.</li> <li>d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> have not been made and will not be made.</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).</li> <li>9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).</li> <li>10. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).</li> </ol>		
<b>Items 11 to 16 below concern document(s) or information included:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <input type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.</li> <li>12. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.</li> <li>13. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment.  <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.</li> <li>14. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification.</li> <li>15. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.</li> <li>16. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other items or information:            Return Postcard, Application Data Sheet, FORM 2038</li> </ol>		

CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING	
<b>EL830940635US</b>	
NUMBER	
DATE OF DEPOSIT	15 Mar 02
I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "EXPRESS MAIL POST OFFICE TO ADDRESSEE" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231	
 Signature	

JC10 Rec'd PCT/PTO 15 MAR 2002

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known see 37 CFR 1.5)		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/GB00/03635		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 13485 0004 NPUS00	
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted: <b>Basic National Fee (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)):</b> Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO ..... \$1040.00  International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO ..... \$890.00  International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO ..... \$740.00  international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4)..... \$710.00  International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) ..... \$ 100.00  <b>ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =</b> \$890.00				<b>CALCULATIONS</b> PTO USE ONLY	
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).				\$0.00	
Claims	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate		
Total Claims	25 - 20 =	5	x \$ 18.00	\$90.00	
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	x \$ 84.00	\$0.00	
Multiple dependent claim(s) (if applicable)			+ \$270.00	\$-0.00	
<b>TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =</b>				\$980.00	
Reduction by 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small Entity statement must also be filed. (NOTE: 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28)				\$490.00	
<b>SUBTOTAL =</b>				\$490.00	
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				+ \$n/a.00	
<b>TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =</b>				\$490.00	
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property)				+ \$40.00	
<b>TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =</b>				\$530.00	
				Amount to be refunded	\$ .00
				charged	\$ .00
a. <input type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$ .00 cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please charge as indicated on enclosed FORM 2038 in the amount of \$ 530.00 to cover the above fees. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 01-2508/13485.0004.NPUS00. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.  NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.					
SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  Carter J. White HOWREY SIMON ARNOLD & WHITE LLP 750 Bering Drive Houston, TX 77057-2198 (713) 787-1400			 SIGNATURE  Carter J. White NAME  41,374 REGISTRATION NUMBER		



10/088292  
JC10 Rec'd PCT/PTO 15 MAR 2002  
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HOUSTON, TX 77057-2198  
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FAX 713.787.1440  
A LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: FREEMAN, Neville J. et al.

Group Art Unit: Not known

International

Examiner: Not assigned

Application No.: PCT/GB00/03635

US Serial No.: Not known

Atty. Dkt. No.: 13485.0004.NPUS00  
(URQA:004)

Confirmation No.: Not known

Filed: Filed herewith

For: DEVICE FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED  
HOUSING OF A PLANAR OPTICAL  
COMPONENT

**First PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

EXPRESS MAIL MAILING LABEL

NUMBER EL430940635US  
DATE OF DEPOSIT 15 March

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service  
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indicated above and is addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington D.C. 20231.

*Carter White*  
Signature

Before undertaking the examination and calculation of the fees due in the above noted application, Applicant requests the following:

**AMENDMENTS:**

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the specification in the following manner:

On page 1, line 2, please insert the following:

Priority is claimed under 35 USC §371 of International Application Number PCT/GB00/03536, filed 22 September, 2000 which claims priority under Article 4 of the Paris



Serial No.: Filed herewith  
 Confirmation No.: Not known  
 Applicant: FREEMAN, Neville J. et al.  
 Atty. Ref.: 13485.0004.NPUS00

Convention to United Kingdom Patent Application Number 9922601.1, filed 24 September 1999.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel without prejudice claim 25.

Please amend the claims 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 22, 24, and 26 in the following manner:

5. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the planar optical component is a sensor.

6. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 5 wherein the sensor is mounted on a sensor base and is in intimate thermal contact therewith.

7. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the optical assembly and inner temperature controller are contained within a conducting sleeve.

10. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 8 wherein the heat shroud comprises an integral laser module holder for inserting a laser module.

11. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 3 further comprising a Peltier exhaust assembly which permits thermal transfer from an exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

13. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 11 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: means for thermally contacting the inner Peltier assembly with the exhaust plate.

15. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 11 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: an exhaust guide capable of fitting over the insulating collar of a laser module.



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17. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1 further comprising: an outer temperature controller which permits coarse temperature control of one or more of the group selected from the conducting sleeve, laser module, laser-module holder, the exterior parts of the optical assembly and the electronics.

22. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1 which is capable of sequential construction from a plurality of discrete assemblies, said assemblies being:  
an optical assembly contained within a conducting sleeve;  
an inner Peltier assembly comprising an inner Peltier; and  
a Peltier exhaust assembly, wherein: (1) the inner Peltier assembly is housed within the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve intimate thermal contact with the planar optical component and (2) the Peltier exhaust assembly permits thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment and is thermally isolated from the conducting sleeve.

24. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the planar optical component has a plurality of waveguides.

26. (Amended) A process for constructing a device as defined in claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:  
inserting an optical assembly in a conducting sleeve comprising an integral laser module housing;  
inserting a laser module into the laser module housing;  
housing an inner Peltier assembly in the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve thermal contact with the planar optical component ;  
positioning a Peltier exhaust assembly in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

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Serial No.: Filed herewith  
Confirmation No.: Not known  
Applicant: FREEMAN, Neville J. et al.  
Atty. Ref.: 13485.0004.NPUS00

**REMARKS:**

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

The above noted amendment to the specification has been made to assert Applicants' priority claims under 35 USC §371 and Article 4 of the Paris Convention. No new matter is being introduced by the proposed amendment.

\*\*\*\*\*

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The above amendments to the claims have been made to bring the application into better condition for examination by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Specifically, claim 25 a claim directed to a kit, which is permitted under United Kingdom's patent law, has been canceled because such claims are not permitted under US law. Claims 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 22, 24, and 26 have been amended to remove the multiple - multiple dependency of these claims, which is permitted under United Kingdom's patent law. A marked up copy of the amended claims 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 22, 24, and 26 are attached to this paper for use by the Examiner.

Applicants submit that the amendments do not narrow the scope of protection sought in any manner. Further these amendments are being made for purposes unrelated to the art of record and have been made to place the application in the best format possible for examination by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

The claims and amended claims are submitted as being clearly distinct and patentable over the art of record and therefore Applicants respectfully request their entry and allowance by the Examiner.

\*\*\*\*\*

Applicants request for any extension of time that may be deemed necessary to further the prosecution of this application.

Applicants' representative authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 01-2508, referencing Order No. 13485.0004.NPUS00.



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In order to facilitate the resolution of any issues or questions presented by this paper, Applicants request that the Examiner directly contact the undersigned by phone to further the discussion.

In order to promote the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is authorized to contact the undersigned by electronic mail. Please address all e-mail to: [whitec@howrey.com](mailto:whitec@howrey.com)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carter J. White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carter J. White

Patent Attorney

Reg. No. 41374

Tel. 713 268 1372

Date: 15 Mar 02



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Serial No.: Filed herewith  
Confirmation No.: Not known  
Applicant: FREEMAN, Neville J. et al.  
Atty. Ref.: 13485.0004.NPUS00

**CLAIMS SHOWING AMENDMENTS:**

5. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the planar optical component is a sensor.
6. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 5 wherein the sensor is mounted on a sensor base and is in intimate thermal contact therewith.
7. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the optical assembly and inner temperature controller are contained within a conducting sleeve.
10. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~either of claims 8 or 9~~ claim 8 wherein the heat shroud comprises an integral laser module holder for inserting a laser module.
11. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any of claims 3 to 10~~ claim 3 further comprising a Peltier exhaust assembly which permits thermal transfer from an exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.
13. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 11 ~~or 12~~ wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: means for thermally contacting the inner Peltier assembly with the exhaust plate.
15. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any of claims 11 to 14~~ claim 11 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: an exhaust guide capable of fitting over the insulating collar of a laser module.
17. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 further comprising: an outer temperature controller which permits coarse temperature control of one or more of the group selected from the conducting sleeve, laser module, laser-module holder, the exterior parts of the optical assembly and the electronics.





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22. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 which is capable of sequential construction from a plurality of discrete assemblies, said assemblies being:

an optical assembly contained within a conducting sleeve;

an inner Peltier assembly comprising an inner Peltier; and

a Peltier exhaust assembly, wherein: (1) the inner Peltier assembly is housed within the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve intimate thermal contact with the planar optical component and (2) the Peltier exhaust assembly permits thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment and is thermally isolated from the conducting sleeve.

24. (Amended) A device as claimed in ~~any preceding claim~~ 1 wherein the planar optical component has a plurality of waveguides.

26. (Amended) A process for constructing a device as defined in ~~any of claims 1 to 24~~ claim 1, the process comprising the steps of:

inserting an optical assembly in a conducting sleeve comprising an integral laser module housing;

inserting a laser module into the laser module housing;

housing an inner Peltier assembly in the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve thermal contact with the planar optical component ;

positioning a Peltier exhaust assembly in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

More generally, there is a need for sensor assemblies of simpler construction and improved reliability. The range





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Preferably the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises an exhaust plate positioned to allow thermal exchange with the environment. The exhaust plate is conveniently located at or near to an end of the device remote from the optical assembly. Preferably the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises means for thermally contacting the inner Peltier assembly with the exhaust plate. A thermally conducting strip may be used for this purpose (eg of copper). Preferably, the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises an exhaust guide (eg in the form of a ring) which is capable of fitting over the insulating collar of the laser module. The exhaust guide defines a slot into which the exhaust strip may be inserted.

In a preferred embodiment, the optical assembly and inner temperature controller are contained within a conducting sleeve. The conducting sleeve fulfils thermal management of the temperature sensitive components of the device eg provides a highly stable temperature environment for the inner temperature controller, provides precision temperature control for peripheral components such as the laser diode, provides a thermally stable environment for temperature control electronics and controls the temperature of incoming gases or liquids through the inlet and outlet ports. All these functions contribute to the temperature of the planar optical component being contained within desirable limits (typically the target control span is 20 micro Kelvin).

In a preferred embodiment, the conducting sleeve comprises a heat shroud which is typically made of copper. The heat shroud is preferably provided with an opening which is suitably disposed to coincide with the cavity in the optical assembly. This advantageously allows the inner Peltier assembly to be inserted in the optical assembly,

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after the optical assembly has been inserted in the conducting sleeve (eg heat shroud).

Preferably, the heat shroud comprises an integral laser module holder for inserting a laser module. Preferably the laser module holder is provided with an outwardly disposed insulating collar. Preferably the electronics are housed within the heat shroud.

Preferably the device comprises an outer temperature controller which permits coarse temperature control of for example the conducting sleeve, laser module, laser module holder, the exterior parts of the optical assembly and the electronics. The outer temperature controller is thermally independent of the inner temperature controller. The outer temperature controller conveniently takes the form of an outer Peltier assembly. Preferably, the outer Peltier assembly is provided externally of the restraining sleeve which is provided with an aperture to enable exposure of an effective area of the conducting sleeve to achieve thermal contact with the outer Peltier assembly.

Preferably, the device is provided with a means for urging the Peltier exhaust assembly onto the inner Peltier assembly. For example, a restraining sleeve is added outwardly of the heat shroud to force the Peltier exhaust assembly onto the inner Peltier assembly at one end and the exhaust plate at the other.

A preferred device of the invention is based on the principle of "a Russian doll" which has the advantage of being able to be constructed from a plurality of discrete assemblies. The assemblies of the device may be constructed as a plurality of shells which allow advantageously

straightforward, sequential construction of the overall device.

Thus a preferred embodiment of the device of the invention is capable of sequential construction from a plurality of discrete assemblies, said assemblies being: an optical assembly contained within a conducting sleeve; an inner Peltier assembly comprising an inner Peltier; and a Peltier exhaust assembly, wherein: the inner Peltier assembly is housed within the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve intimate thermal contact with the planar optical component and the Peltier exhaust assembly permits thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment and is thermally isolated from the inner Peltier assembly and conducting sleeve.

Particularly preferably, this embodiment further comprises a discrete assembly being an outer Peltier assembly in thermal contact with the conducting sleeve.

Viewed from a further aspect the present invention provides a kit capable of being assembled into a device as hereinbefore defined, said kit comprising: an optical assembly, an inner Peltier assembly, a conducting sleeve, a Peltier exhaust assembly and an outer Peltier assembly, wherein: the optical assembly is capable of being inserted in the conducting sleeve; the inner Peltier assembly is capable of being housed within the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve intimate thermal contact with the planar optical component; the Peltier exhaust assembly is capable of being positioned in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to....

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permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment; and  
the outer Peltier assembly is capable of being positioned so as to achieve thermal contact with the conducting sleeve.

Viewed from a yet further aspect the present invention provides the use of a device or kit as hereinbefore described as a gas or liquid sensor.

Viewed from a still yet further aspect the present invention provides a process for constructing a device as hereinbefore defined comprising the steps of:

inserting an optical assembly in a conducting sleeve (eg copper heat shroud) comprising an integral laser module housing;

inserting a laser module into the laser module housing;

housing an inner Peltier assembly in the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve thermal contact with the planar optical component;

positioning a Peltier exhaust assembly in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

Where appropriate, the process of the invention may comprise the additional steps of:

constructing an outer restraining sleeve;

constructing an outer casing; and

positioning an outer Peltier assembly on the outer casing or restraining assembly whereby to achieve thermal contact with the conducting sleeve.

In order to impart optimum thermal performance to the device, the materials of the various component parts are



judiciously chosen. Where necessary, component parts may be required to have good insulating and mechanical properties, thermal drive (good thermal conductor), thermal exhaust (good thermal conductor), high performance insulating properties and mechanical properties, high performance insulating properties, etc. Materials for these purposes will be familiar to those skilled in the art.

The exclusion of stray radiation in accordance with the optical assembly of the device of the invention enables the number of components to be minimised and enables straightforward analysis of the signals generated by the planar optical component (such as the centre of gravity of a series of interferometric fringes for example). This is achieved by ensuring that electromagnetic radiation excites substantially only the planar optical component. The optical assembly of the device of the invention is suitable for the fault tolerant construction of planar optical sensors and ensures optimal performance from the planar optical component. Tolerances are typically reduced by approximately 1000 fold enabling cheap mass production methods such as compression moulding and injection moulding to be employed.

In a preferred embodiment, the optical assembly of the device according to the invention comprises a planar optical component having a plurality of waveguides. Typically the planar optical component comprises a sensing waveguide and a reference waveguide. Preferably the planar optical component is any of those described in WO-A-98/22807 (IMCO (1097) Ltd et al).

Preferably the optical assembly is provided with one or more seats upon which the planar optical component may be seated.

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The optical assembly may comprise a holder for mounting the planar optical component and a housing adapted to receive internally said holder so as to define a longitudinal path through the device in which the planar optical component is effectively exposed in free space. Preferably the holder comprises a basal recess in which the planar optical component may be mounted. To ensure that the edge of the planar optical component which is to be excited by the electromagnetic radiation is suitably exposed in the longitudinal path, one or more longitudinal cavities may be provided in the base of the holder such that when the planar optical component is positioned adjacent an aperture in the housing, the majority of the leading and trailing edges of the planar optical component may be exposed in free space. In a particularly preferred embodiment of the invention, the holder is removably received in the housing. The provision of a holder of this type advantageously enables the planar optical component (eg sensor) to be replaced without discarding or rebuilding the supporting components. Where appropriate, the optical assembly of the device of the invention may provide a means for providing a constant force between the holder and the housing.

Preferably the optical assembly of the device of the invention includes a guiding means in the form of a spacer incorporated in the planar optical component or in the main body of the optical assembly. In the first instance, the spacer may be incorporated in the planar optical component conventionally during manufacture. In the second instance, the spacer takes the form of (or is located on) a seat in the optical assembly upon which the planar optical component is located in use. This latter embodiment has the advantages that the sensing layer of the planar optical component is more efficiently exposed to the test material, that the manufacture of the planar optical component is simplified and

that the disturbance of the planar optical component (as a result of bringing it into contact with the seat or with the modified seat upon which the spacer is located) is minimised. The material from which the spacer is made is judiciously chosen in terms of refractive index and physical properties. The spacer is advantageously permeable to the sample under analysis.

In a preferred embodiment, the optical assembly of the device of the invention comprises a first aperture at a first end of a longitudinal path for admitting electromagnetic radiation and a second aperture at a second end of said longitudinal path for transmitting electromagnetic radiation. Provided the spacer is of a known predetermined thickness relative to the known distance between the first aperture and the surface upon which the planar optical component is seated within the optical assembly, electromagnetic radiation may be effectively guided onto the waveguides.

In a particularly preferred embodiment, the planar optical component and incorporated spacer may be located on a silicon baseplate. The silicon baseplate which is typically optically flat may be conveniently provided with a hole over which the planar optical component is located. Conveniently, the spacer may seal the hole in the baseplate provided the spacer is sufficiently (eg optically) flat.

In an especially preferred embodiment, the silicon baseplate is provided with a channel (eg a V-shaped channel) capable of receiving an optical fibre wherein the depth of the channel predetermines the position and height that electromagnetic radiation is emitted relative to the surface of the silicon baseplate. Since the position of the waveguides above the surface of the silicon baseplate is determined by the height of the incorporated spacer, the

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position of the electromagnetic radiation and the waveguides may be correlated. Stray light is simply emitted into the silicon.

In an alternative especially preferred embodiment, the silicon baseplate forms part of an integrated electro-optic device in which a laser source is integrated into the silicon baseplate. The guiding means is provided by an incorporated spacer located on the silicon baseplate or the planar optical component as hereinbefore described.

In either of the especially preferred embodiments, the output may be monitored by a discrete detector or an imaging fibre or fibre array may be used to collect the output image. Alternatively, a photodetector could be integrated into the silicon structure. Using fibres in and out is very useful in safety critical applications (ie there is no electricity).

Preferably, the optical assembly of the device of the invention comprises means (eg a flat surface, one or more seats or seals) for providing a gas or liquid seal to the surface of the planar optical component to allow transport of an analyte to and from the planar optical component (eg sensor) and measurement of the optical behaviour of the component in the presence of the analyte. The provision of a seal to the surface of the planar optical component (eg sensor) reduces the dead volume to a minimum (this is important in providing optimal performance with chemical sensors). The provision of a seal to the surface of the planar optical component (eg sensor) also enables liquid samples to be used in addition to gas samples. This is not conceivable with a conventional freestanding arrangement as wetting of the end faces would lead to optical misalignment.

In all cases, the body of the optical assembly is preferably opaque to minimise stray electromagnetic radiation. Thus the planar optical component may be advantageously mounted on a base which does not transmit electromagnetic radiation, thereby preventing stray electromagnetic radiation passing thereunder. Preferably, the seat or seal of the optical assembly also may not transmit electromagnetic radiation in the longitudinal direction whereby to further prevent stray electromagnetic radiation passing over the sensor surface and reaching the detector. Preferably, the seat or seal has an inlet, a channel and an outlet providing a means through which analyte (eg gases or liquids) may pass. In this way, analyte is able to pass into and out of the absorbent layers of a planar optical component (eg chemical sensor) leading to measurable changes in the output electromagnetic radiation. Preferably, the extremes (edges) of the sensor are sealed from the environment to prevent extraneous effects from gases, vapours or liquids from external sources not related to the sample under analysis.

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In a preferred embodiment, where the device of the invention is to be used on test materials, it is preferred that the thermal mass of the incoming material is minimised by ensuring the sample volume and the inlet volume are minimised. This may be achieved by low dead volume within the sensor "cavity" and narrow bore inlets. In addition, the thermal mass of the inlet system needs to be high to prevent thermal fluctuation over time. Stainless steel pipework is preferred. Preferably, the inlet pipe is in thermal contact with the copper shroud eg the pipework is run along the shroud. Appropriate thermal lagging of the pipework may be required in order to prevent too high a thermal loss from the complete outer system.

The invention will now be described in preferred embodiments in a non-limitative sense with reference to the accompanying Figures in which:

Figure 1 illustrates a bottom view of a holder of an optical assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 illustrates an end elevation of a holder positioned within a housing of an optical assembly in accordance with an embodiment the invention;

Figure 3 illustrates a cross-sectional disassembled view of an optical assembly of an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 4 illustrates an exploded view of a cross-section of an optical assembly of a disassembled embodiment of the invention;

Figure 5 illustrates a top view of a housing and a partial side view of a holder within the housing of an optical assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

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Figure 6 illustrates an optical assembly of an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 7 illustrates an optical assembly of a further embodiment of the invention;

Figure 8 illustrates an optical assembly of a further embodiment of the invention;

Figure 9 illustrates an optical assembly of a further embodiment of the invention; and

Figures 10 to 18 illustrate the components and stages of construction of an embodiment of the device of the invention.

Figure 1 illustrates a holder 2 in which a planar optical component (sensor) 3 is mounted in a basal recess 1. Longitudinal cavities 4a and 4b are provided along a longitudinal path to allow the sensor to be positioned adjacent an aperture in a housing (of the type shown in Figures 2 and 5) so as to ensure that the majority of the leading and trailing edges of the sensor are exposed in free space.

Figure 2 shows an end elevation of the optical assembly 21 of a device of the invention with a holder 22 positioned within a housing 27 in such a manner as to define a longitudinal path into the housing, through to a planar waveguide chemical sensor 25 and out of the housing 27 (not shown). The end face of the housing 27 has dowel holes (one of four is designated with numeral 23) to enable the reliable and accurate location of additional plates upon which may be mounted electromagnetic radiation sources (such as a laser diode for example), electromagnetic radiation detectors (such as a photodiode array for example) and other optional components such as lenses. The housing has a circular aperture 24 which allows the electromagnetic radiation to pass therethrough (to the planar waveguide chemical sensor

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25). The aperture 24 also has a recess 26 which enables a window capable of transmitting the electromagnetic radiation to be fitted. This ensures that the sensor 25 is sealed from the surroundings in terms of potential chemical interference. A means for transporting the analyte to the sensor has been omitted from this Figure for the sake of clarity but is described in detail hereinafter.

An exploded cross-section of the optical assembly of an embodiment of the device of the invention is provided in Figure 3. Shown removed from the housing 30 are the sensor holder 32 and sensor 35 with longitudinal cavities 34a and 34b allowing the majority of the leading and trailing edges of the sensor to be exposed in free space. The sensor 35 is inserted into the housing 30 such that the top surface of the sensor 35 makes contact and seals (in a gas/liquid type manner) with the sensor housing seat 36. The apertures 37 for the passage of electromagnetic radiation and the recesses for the windows 38 allow the transmission of electromagnetic radiation. The windows themselves have been omitted for the sake of clarity. The dowel holes 33 are shown occupied by dowels 39. The channel 40 for the passage of analyte over the surface and the conduits 41 for the transmission of the analyte to and from the sensor surface are shown. In this embodiment, the conduits 41 are terminated with 1/4" 28 UNF inverted cone fittings (made by OMNIFIT) 42 to provide a mechanical connection to the desired test source.

Figure 4 shows in detailed cross-section the optical assembly of an embodiment of the invention. The holder 32 and sensor 35 are shown separately in Figure 4i. The housing is shown separately in Figure 4iii with windows 43 and a plate mounted with a laser diode 44 and a plate mounted with a photodetector array 45. The precise location of the plates is achieved by the dowels 39. The housing seat 36, the



channel for test materials 40 and the conduits 41 are as hereinbefore described. Figure 4ii shows the complete assembly with the holder 32 and sensor 35 in place in the housing 30. The positioning of holder 32 in housing 30 creates a dead volume 40. The volume around the ends of the sensor 46 is minimised to reduce effects due to external or ambient chemical changes. Figure 4iii shows the inverted cone fittings for connection to the device of the invention and transmission of analyte.

Figures 5i and 5ii show a partial cross-section and plan view respectively of the sensor housing seat which seals to the surface of the sensor 35. The seat or seal 36 provides a complete gas tight seal to the surface of the sensor 35. The conduits 41 allow the passage of test analyte to and from the sensor surface via the channel 40 which allows the analyte to come into intimate contact with the sensor surface.

Figure 6 illustrates an assembled holder 61 and housing 62 of an optical assembly of a device of the invention. The sensor 68 comprises waveguides 63 and 64 together with a spacer 65 which may be deposited when the sensor is manufactured. Provided the spacer thickness and height of surface A are known relative to the position of electromagnetic radiation source 66, the electromagnetic radiation will fall substantially wholly on the waveguides. The holder and housing are made opaque to the wavelength of electromagnetic radiation to reduce stray output to the detector 67. Engineering tolerances are around 200  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Figure 9 illustrates an assembled holder 61 and housing 62 similar to Figure 6 but with the spacer 65a provided on the seats 65b. This improves the exposure of the sensing layer to test material.



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that the holder and housing are integral to the main body of the optical assembly (10m) rather than being separable parts.

Outer part (10b) comprises a mounting plate (10d) made of a suitable engineering material with good insulating properties which has locating holes (10e) for long reach countersink bolts (10a) and a photodiode array (10c). A spacer/window retainer (10f) made of the same engineering material comprises locating holes (10g and 10i) for the bolts (10a) and a broad aperture (10h) to allow output light from the sensor to reach the photodiode (10c). A recess (10j) retains a window (10k) in the correct position during assembly. The window (10k) is made of 4mm thick quartz and is sealed to the main body by an o-ring (10l) which may be constructed of Viton or a higher performance elastomer which is held in a seat (10n and 10q) on the exit face of the main body (10m) of the optical assembly.

The main body (10m) is made of a high performance insulating material which has good mechanical strength and is readily machineable. An example of such a material is Duratec 750. Locating holes (10x and 10s) are provided for the long reach bolts (10a) and the sensor is held in position by two stainless steel part cylinders (10p and 10v). The upper part cylinder (10v) is threaded to accept the inlet and outlet pipework (not shown) which pass through the main body at inlet/outlet conduits (10j'). Access to the surface of the sensor (10u) is possible by virtue of the void created between the upper part cylinder (10v) and the sensor (10u) by an intervening gasket (10o). This is made of a high performance (in terms of chemical resistance and low absorbance) polymer such as Viton. The sensor is mounted on a part cylindrical sensor base (10p) which is made of stainless steel. A cavity (10r) exposes the rear face of the sensor base (10p) to enable subsequent construction of the

Figure 11 shows the components of the inner Peltier assembly of a preferred embodiment of the invention. This comprises an inner Peltier mount (11e) which is made of a good conducting material (eg copper - if it is electrochemically compatible with stainless steel with regard to corrosion) which may be fixed (11a) to the sensor base (11f) which is in intimate thermal contact with the sensor (11g). The inner Peltier mount (11e) is adapted to receive a locating countersink bolt (11a) which enables it to be bolted to the sensor base (11f and see reference 10p in Figure 10). The inner Peltier mount (11e) has a concave underside in order to make optimum thermal contact with the sensor base and a channel (11b) to provide a mounting point for a 2mm thermistor. An inner Peltier (11c) is mounted directly on the inner Peltier mount (11e) and is insulated by a surround (11d). The surround (11d) may be made of a foam type material or mechanically sound insulating material as desired. Parts (11d), (11c) and (11e) may be bonded with an appropriate thermally conducting adhesive if desired.



The laser module (14Bj) may be secured with two Allen bolts and is close fitting into the laser module holder (14Bp). An insulating collar (14Bi) is placed over the laser module holder (14Bp). The ribbon cable output of the

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photodiode array (14Bk) and the two-core output of the laser module (14Bl) are also shown for the sake of completeness.

Figure 14C illustrates the constructed optical assembly and heat shroud in both side and end elevation. Internal detail has been largely omitted for clarity. A section of the main body of the optical assembly (reference Bf in Figure 14B) is clearly visible (14Ca), as is the majority of the sensor base (Figure 10 reference p) which is exposed by opening (14Cb).

The next stage of construction involves fitting the Peltier exhaust assembly as illustrated in Figures 15A-C. Thus Peltier exhaust guide (15Aa) in the form of a ring made of an insulating engineering material fits over the insulating collar of the laser module (15Ab) and comprises locating lugs (15Ac) which fit into the exhaust slot (15Ad). As illustrated in Figure 15B, an insulating plate (15Ba) is fitted into the construction (15Bb) to isolate the laser module and its lead outs (15Bc) and the heat shroud from the Peltier exhaust assembly.

At this stage, the inner Peltier assembly is located in the cavity of the optical assembly in thermal contact with the sensor base. Thus the inner Peltier mount, inner Peltier, insulating surround (Figures 11 and 12 references c, d and e) and a conducting block (15Bd) if required to bring the assembly up to the appropriate level to be inserted into the cavity of the optical assembly (15Be) as described hereinbefore.

An exhaust strip (15Cd) of copper or an equivalent material is laid in a slot created by the exhaust guide (15Cf) and a mechanically rigid insulator (15Ce) (made of Duratec 750 or an equivalent material). The exhaust strip

In Figure 16B, the photodiode ribbon cable has been omitted from the drawings for clarity. The exploded view shows how the restraining sleeve slides over the heat shroud and Peltier exhaust. In this stage, the laser module and thermistor lead-outs (16Ba and 16Bb) which are thermally



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passive are fed down a first conduit (16Bf) of the restraining sleeve, whilst the thermally active lead-outs of the inner Peltier (16Bc) are fed down a second conduit (16Bg). The sleeve runs down the length of the exhaust strip (16Bd) firmly restraining the strip on the inner Peltier assembly at one end and the exhaust plate at the other. The sleeve can then be slid over the construction with the lead-outs being fed down the appropriate conduits as the sleeve progresses. The aperture (16Be) exposes a significant area of the copper heat shroud to enable the closing stages of construction to proceed.

In Figures 17A and 17B, the outer casing is shown in sparing detail in side elevation and cross-section. It is constructed in two parts from an insulating engineering material. The upper part (17Ae) provides a thermal void (heated by the end plate of the optical assembly that is in thermal contact with the copper shroud) in which the control electronics reside. The main part of the outer casing (17Af) 'snap fits' to the upper half at the joint (17Aa). The shoulder (17Ab) retains the exhaust plate. An aperture (17Ad) is provided to allow full access for an outer Peltier assembly. Two hooks are provided (17Ac) which enable the spring clip of the CPU heat sink and fan assembly to be employed to force it on to the rest of the assembly. This has been depicted as using the clip longitudinally. This tends to put stress on the joint (17Aa) which is undesirable. An alternative strategy is to mount the spring clip hooks laterally with both hooks on either the upper part (17Ae) or the main part (17Af) of the outer casing. A means for mounting the outer casing to a base plate or other component may be provided if desired.

The outer Peltier mount of the outer Peltier assembly illustrated in Figure 17B is similar to (although much larger

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than) that of the inner Peltier mount. It provides a large area of thermal contact with the copper heat shroud. A conduit mounts the thermistor (17Ba) and channels (17Bb) provide a means to effect the Peltier lead-out. The restraining sleeve and outer casing provide the coarse alignment of outer Peltier and outer Peltier mount.

The fully assembled device is illustrated in Figure 18 in two side elevation views (at 90° to each other). In the leftmost illustration, the void for the electronics is clearly visible (18a) which is provided by the upper part of the outer casing (18c). The main body of the outer casing (18d) provides a mount for a cooling fan (18b) for the inner Peltier exhaust plate. However it may be possible (and expedient) to include a second pair of hooks to enable the use of a second CPU heat sink/cooling fan spring clip system.

In the rightmost illustration, the lead outs from the outer Peltier and thermistor pairing (18e and 18f) and the photodiode ribbon cable (18k) are shown. The lead-outs from the laser module and the inner Peltier assembly have been omitted for clarity. The outer Peltier mount (18h) can be seen with the thermistor in place upon which is positioned the outer Peltier (18g). The CPU heat sink (18j) and fan assembly (18b) are retained on the Peltier (18g) by the spring clip (18i). Insulating foam (18l) has been placed around the perimeter of the outer Peltier (18g) where it is exposed to the external environment.

The key appropriate to Figure 18 is as follows:

-  Good insulator & mechanical properties
-  Thermal drive (good thermal conductor)
-  Thermal exhaust (good thermal conductor)
-  High performance insulator & Mechanical properties
-  High performance insulator
-  Secondary components (e.g.. Fan)
-  CPU cooling fan retaining spring
-  Peltier

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# CLAIMS

1. A device for housing a planar optical component for use in sensing, said device comprising:

an optical assembly adapted to mount the planar optical component so as to define a longitudinal path through the device in which the planar optical component is effectively exposed in free space and including guiding means for correlating along said longitudinal path the position of said planar optical component and of a source of electromagnetic radiation, whereby to expose said planar optical component to said electromagnetic radiation along said longitudinal path whilst substantially eliminating stray electromagnetic radiation,

wherein the optical assembly comprises a cavity which permits access to a face of the planar optical component or to a face of a base with which the planar optical component is in intimate thermal contact whereby to enable an inner temperature controller to be positioned in thermal contact with the planar optical component for controlling the temperature of the planar optical component.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the inner temperature controller is an inner Peltier assembly capable of adding heat to or dissipating heat from the planar optical component.

3. A device as claimed in claim 2 wherein the inner Peltier assembly comprises: an inner Peltier mounted on an inner Peltier mount.

4. A device as claimed in claim 3 wherein the Peltier mount has a concave underside to optimise thermal contact with the

planar optical component or with a base with which the planar optical component is in intimate thermal contact.

5. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the planar optical component is a sensor.

6. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the sensor is mounted on a sensor base and is in intimate thermal contact therewith.

7. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the optical assembly and inner temperature controller are contained within a conducting sleeve.

8. A device as claimed in claim 7 wherein the conducting sleeve comprises a copper heat shroud.

9. A device as claimed in claim 8 wherein the copper heat shroud is provided with an opening which is suitably disposed to coincide with the cavity in the optical assembly thereby allowing the inner Peltier assembly to be inserted in the optical assembly after the optical assembly has been inserted in the conducting sleeve.

10. A device as claimed in either of claims 8 or 9 wherein the heat shroud comprises an integral laser module holder for inserting a laser module.

11. A device as claimed in any of claims 3 to 10 further comprising a Peltier exhaust assembly which permits thermal transfer from an exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

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12. A device as claimed in claim 11 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: an exhaust plate positioned to allow thermal exchange with the environment.

13. A device as claimed in claim 11 or 12 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: means for thermally contacting the inner Peltier assembly with the exhaust plate.

14. A device as claimed in claim 13 wherein the means for thermally contacting the inner Peltier assembly with the exhaust plate is a thermally conducting exhaust strip.

15. A device as claimed in any of claims 11 to 14 wherein the Peltier exhaust assembly comprises: an exhaust guide capable of fitting over the insulating collar of a laser module.

16. A device as claimed in claim 15 wherein the exhaust guide defines a slot into which the thermally conducting exhaust strip may be inserted.

17. A device as claimed in any preceding claim comprising: an outer temperature controller which permits coarse temperature control of one or more of the group selected from the conducting sleeve, laser module, laser module holder, the exterior parts of the optical assembly and the electronics.

18. A device as claimed in claim 17 wherein the outer temperature controller takes the form of an outer Peltier assembly.

19. A device as claimed in claim 18 comprising: means for urging the Peltier exhaust assembly onto the inner Peltier assembly.



25. A kit capable of being assembled into a device as defined in any preceding claim, said kit comprising:  
an optical assembly, an inner Peltier assembly, a conducting sleeve, a Peltier exhaust assembly and an outer Peltier assembly, wherein:

the optical assembly is capable of being inserted in the conducting sleeve;

the inner Peltier assembly is capable of being housed within the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve intimate thermal contact with the planar optical component;

the Peltier exhaust assembly is capable of being positioned in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment; and

the outer Peltier assembly is capable of being positioned so as to achieve thermal contact with the conducting sleeve.

26. A process for constructing a device as defined in any of claims 1 to 24 comprising the steps of:

inserting an optical assembly in a conducting sleeve comprising an integral laser module housing;

inserting a laser module into the laser module housing;

housing an inner Peltier assembly in the cavity of the optical assembly so as to achieve thermal contact with the planar optical component;

positioning a Peltier exhaust assembly in thermal isolation from the conducting sleeve so as to permit thermal transfer from the exhaust side of the inner Peltier to the environment.

27. A process as claimed in claim 26 comprising the additional steps of:

constructing an outer restraining sleeve;



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constructing an outer casing; and  
positioning an outer Peltier assembly on the outer casing or restraining sleeve whereby to achieve thermal contact with the conducting sleeve.

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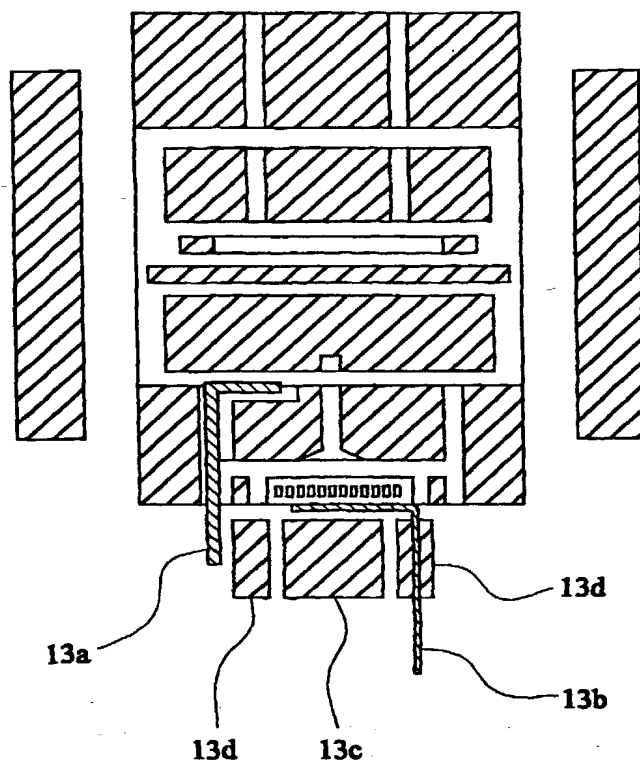
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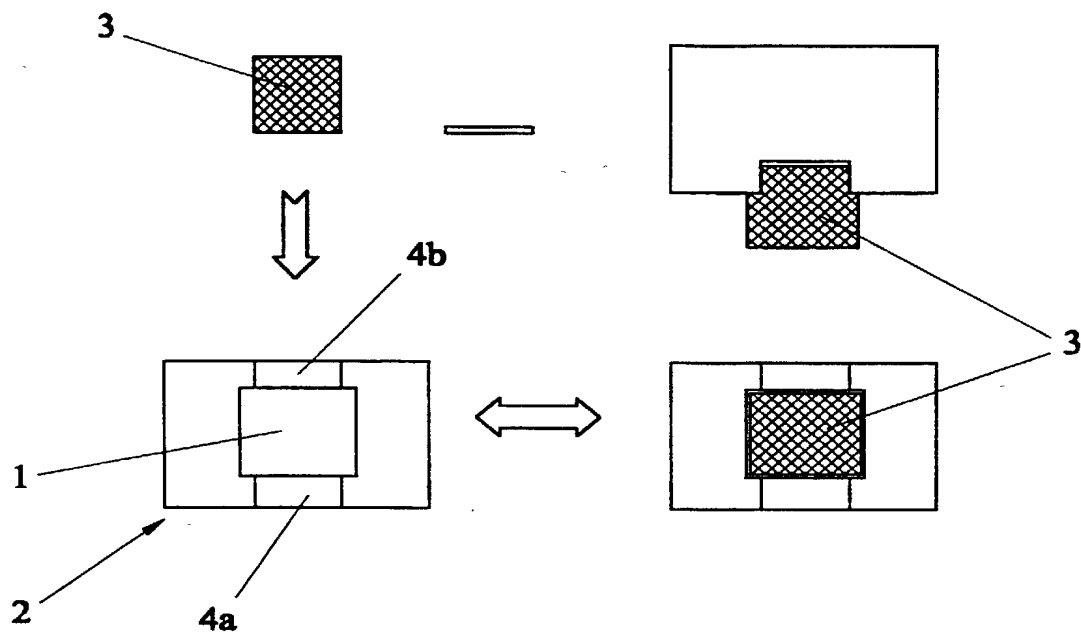
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(54) Title: **DEVICE FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED HOUSING OF A PLANAR OPTICAL COMPONENT**

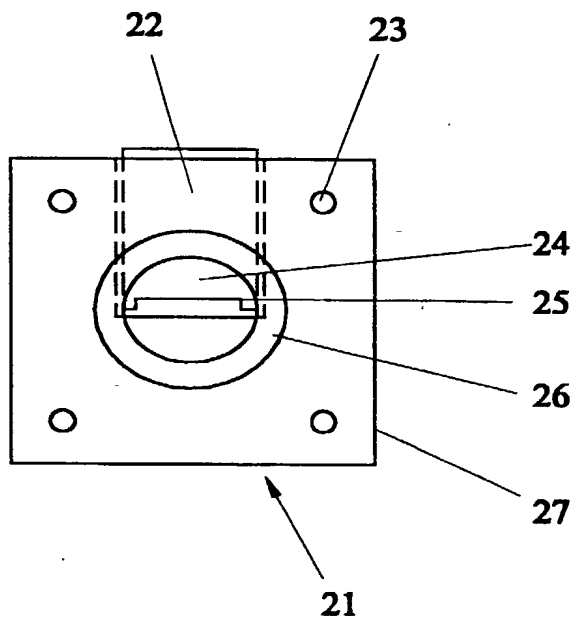


(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to an improved device for housing a planar optical component for use in chemical sensing for example which permits fine temperature control and disposal of heat.

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**FIG. 1**



**FIG. 2**

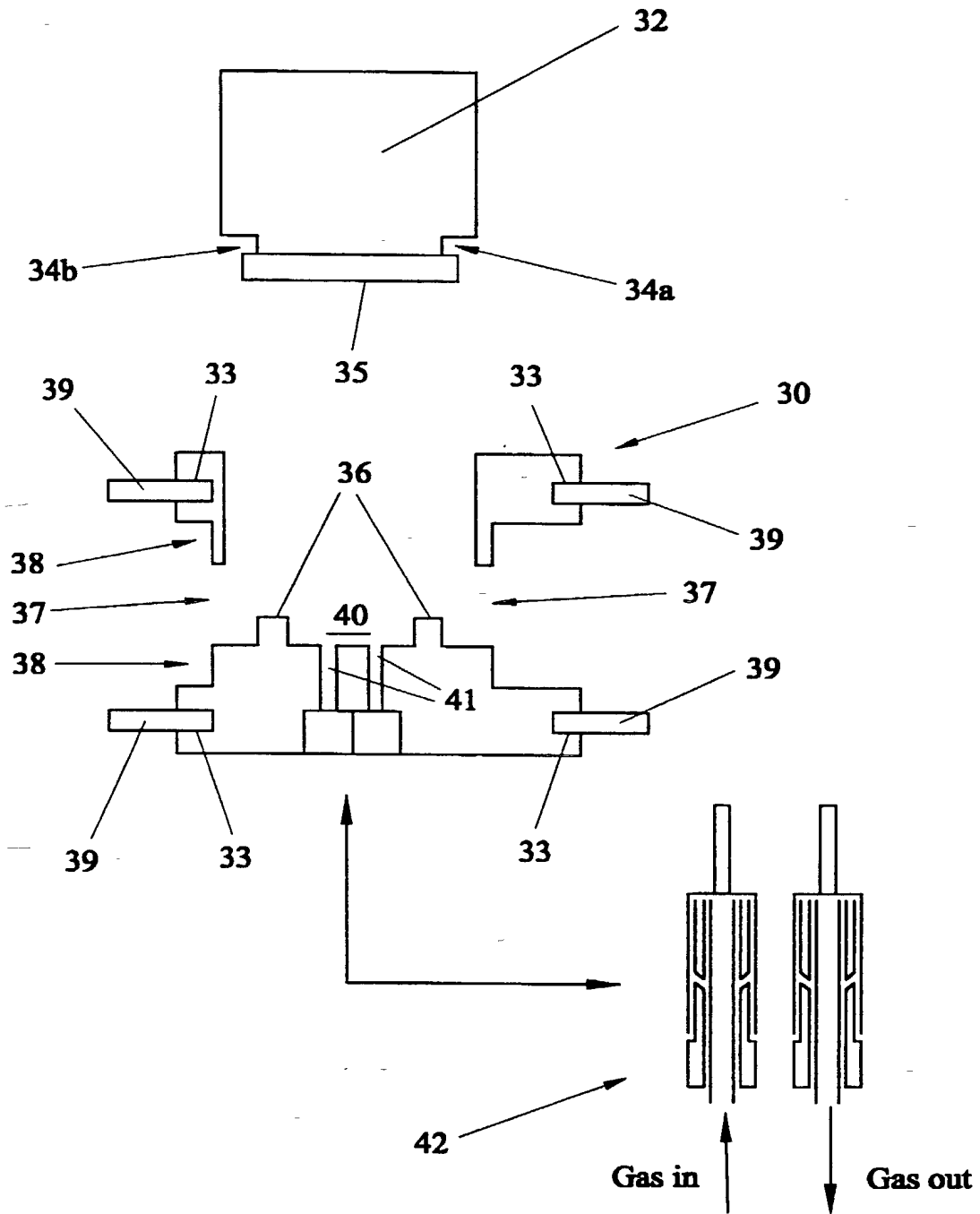


FIG. 3

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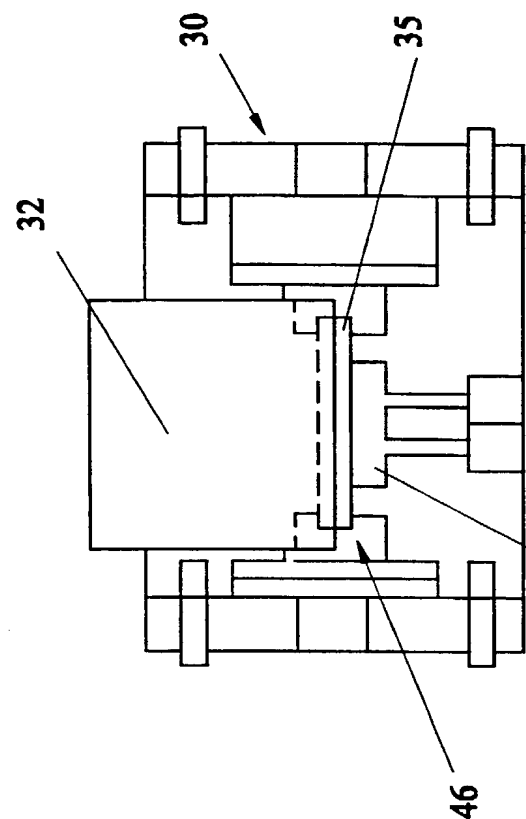


FIG. 4(i)

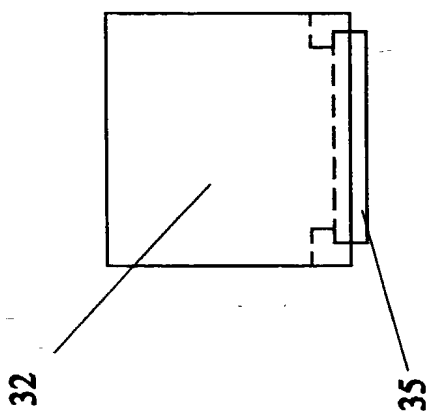


FIG. 4(ii)

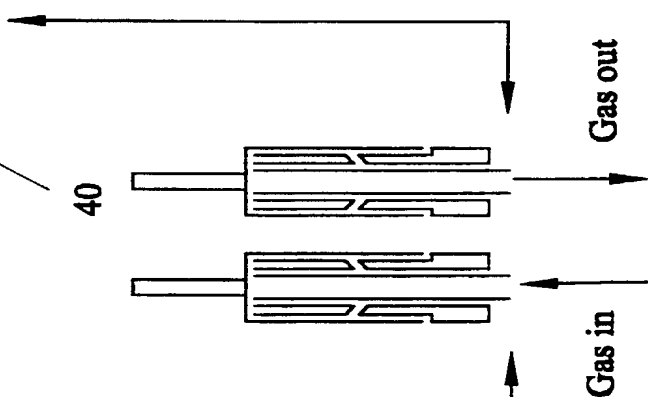
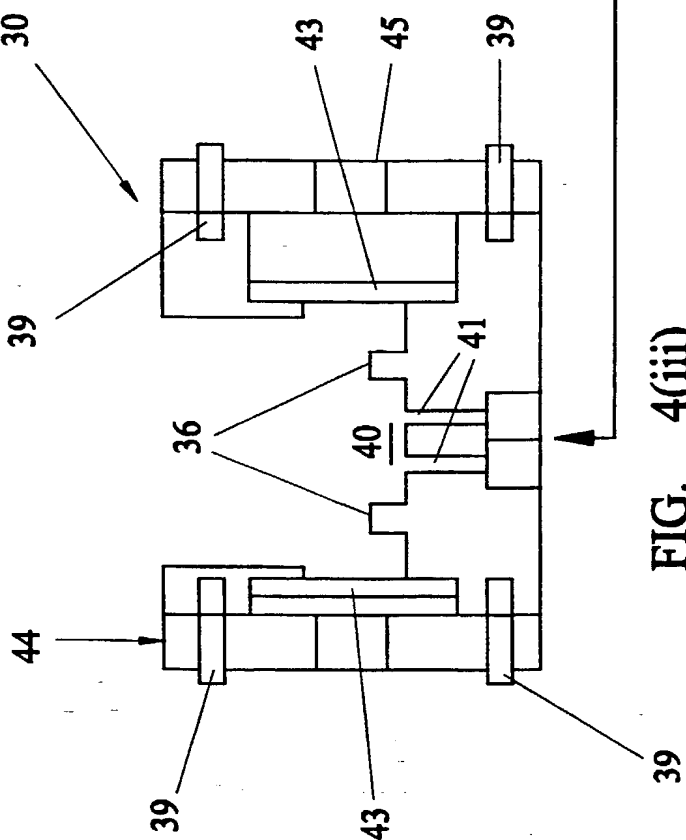


FIG. 4(iii)



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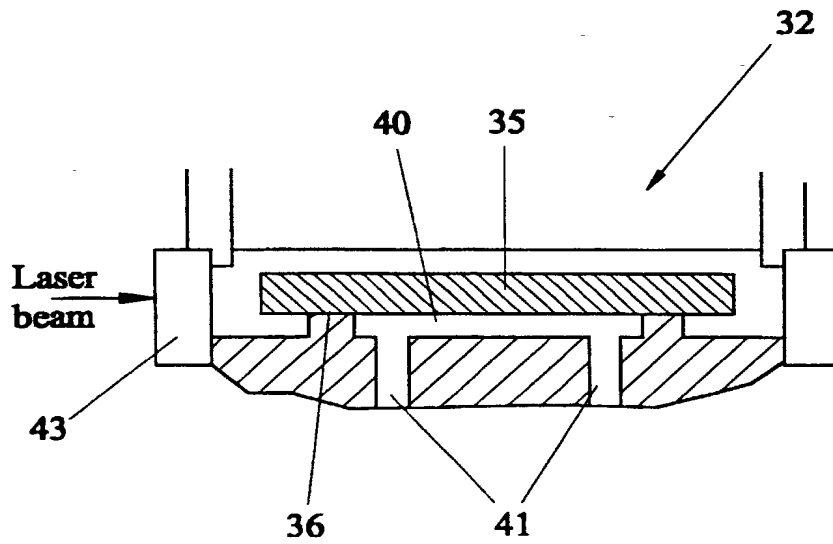


FIG. 5(i)

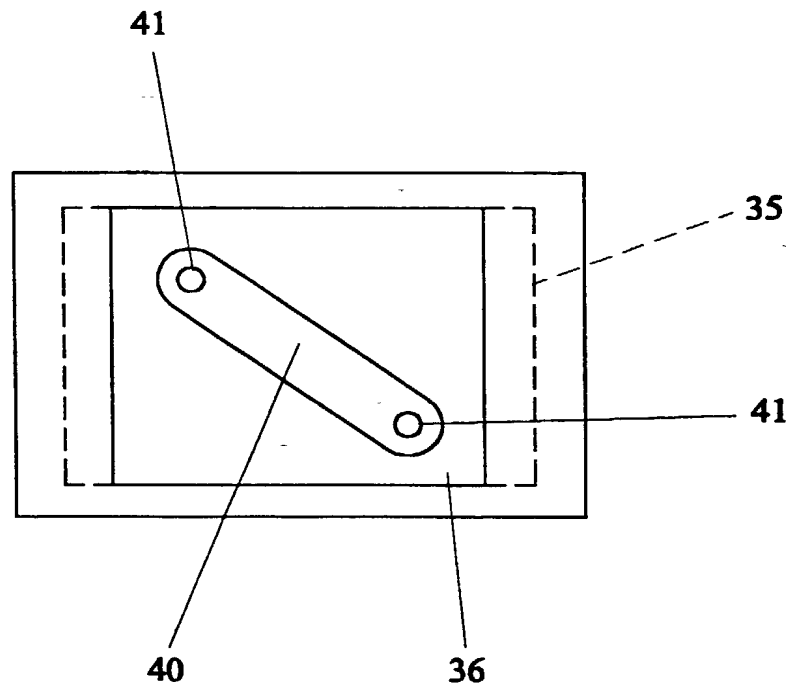


FIG. 5(ii)

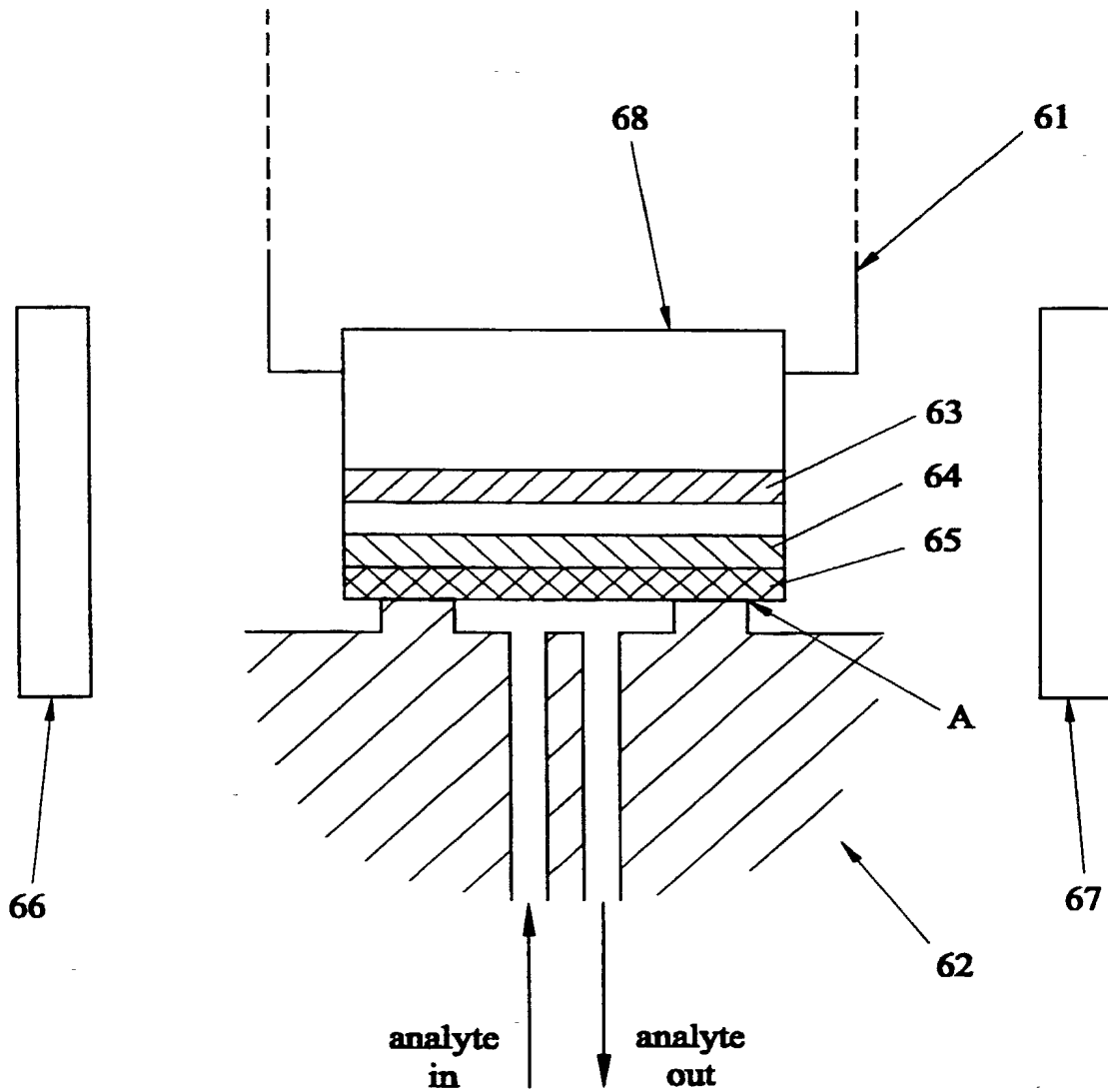


FIG. 6

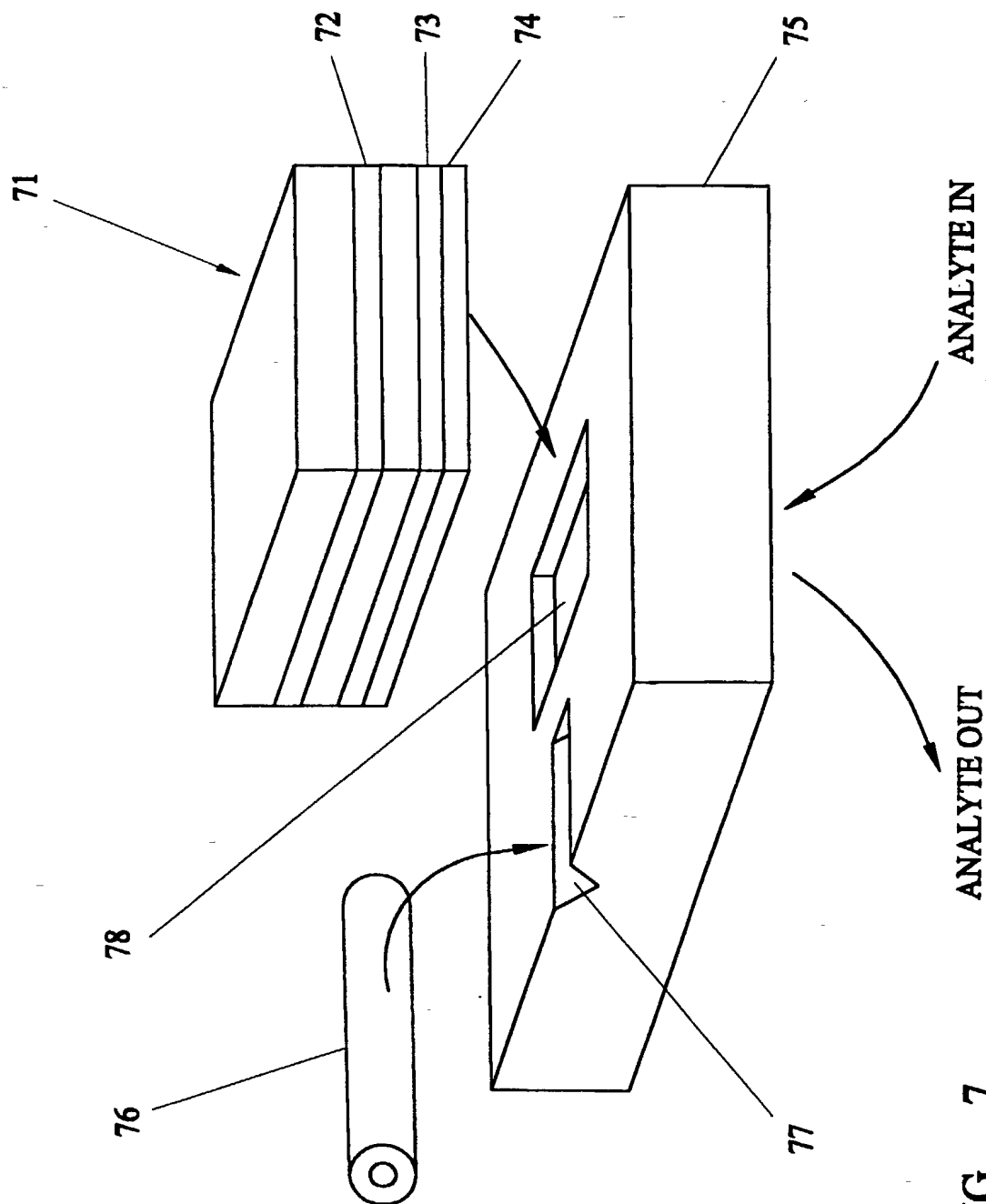


FIG. 7



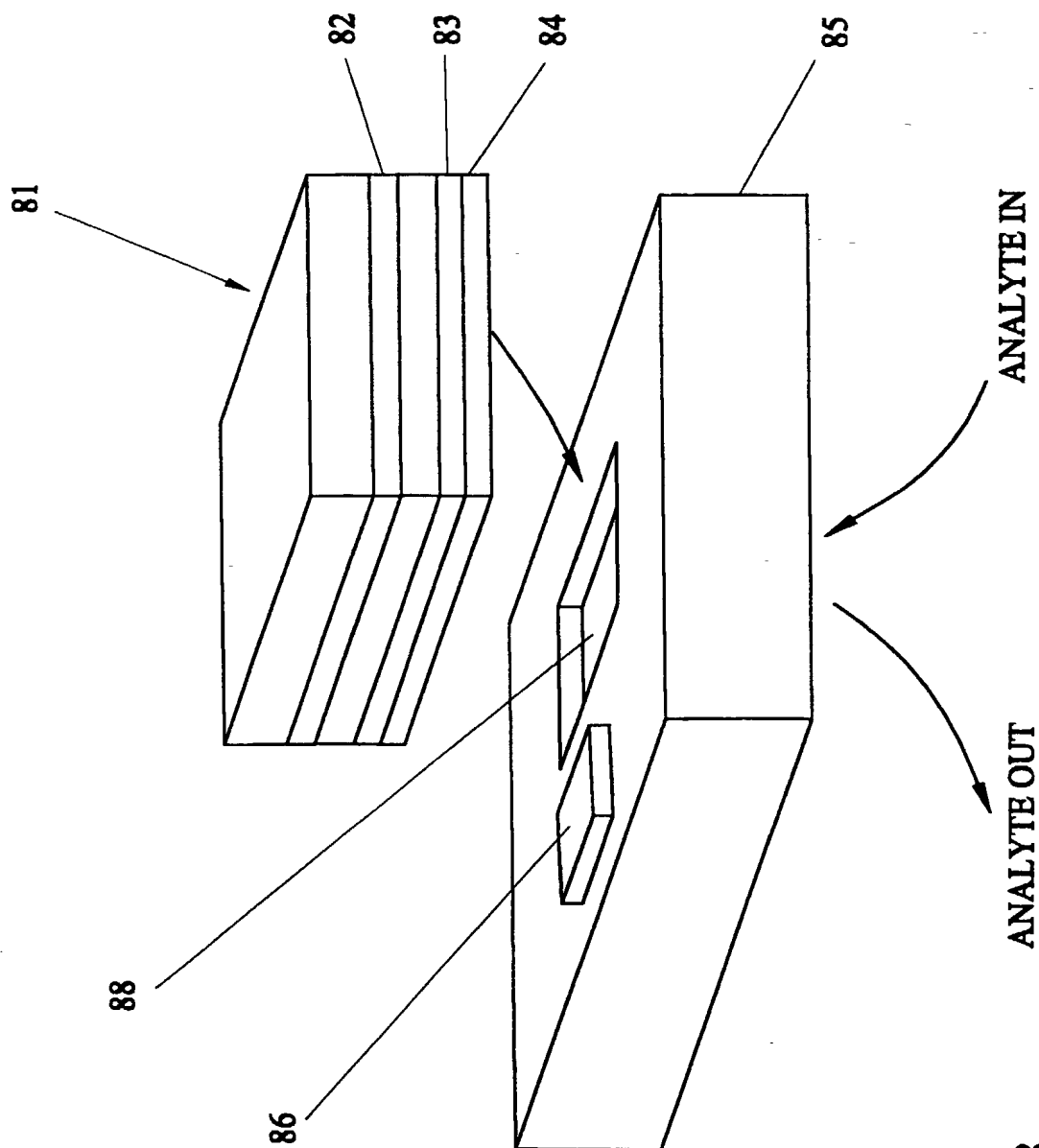


FIG. 8

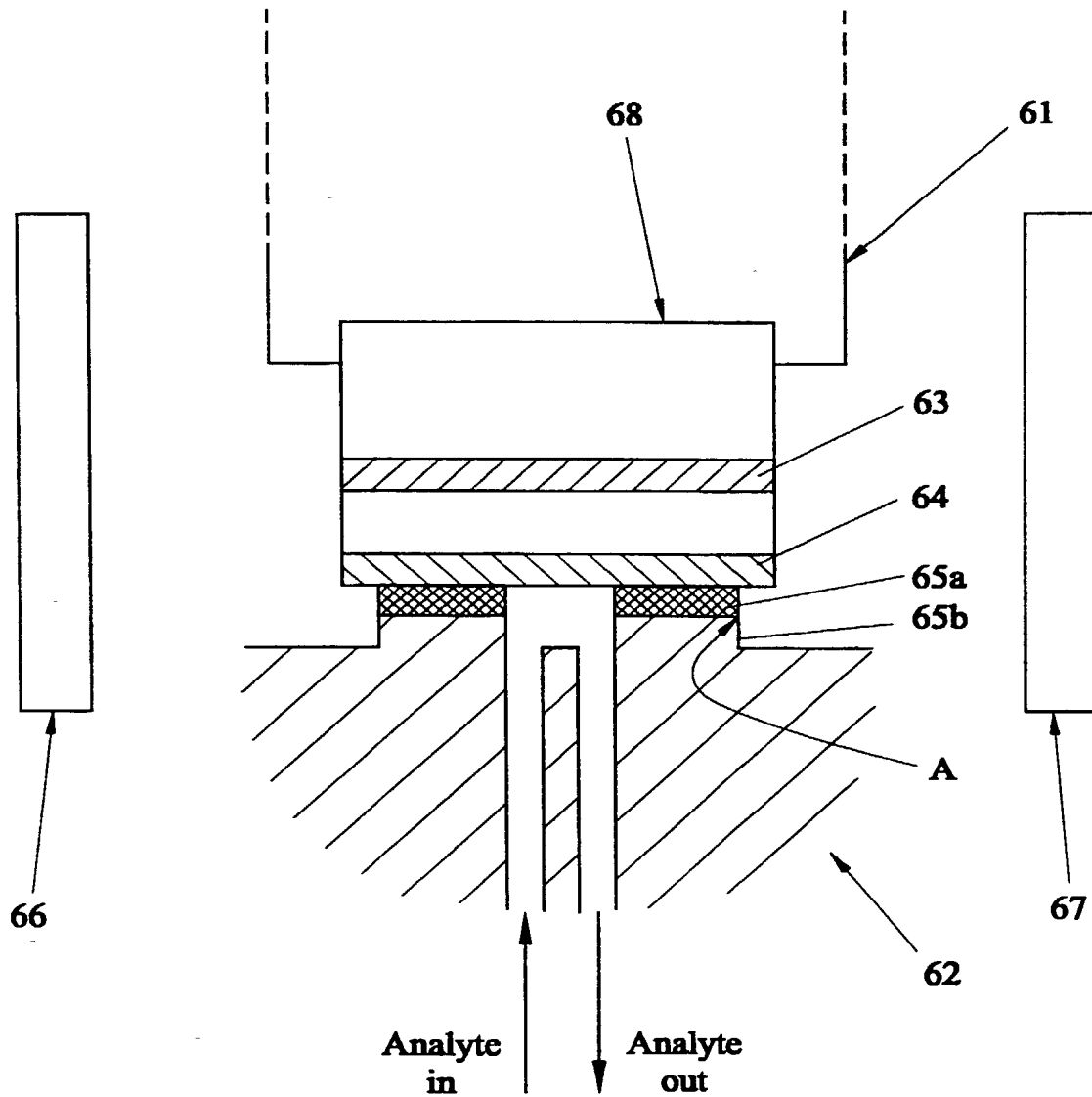


FIG. 9

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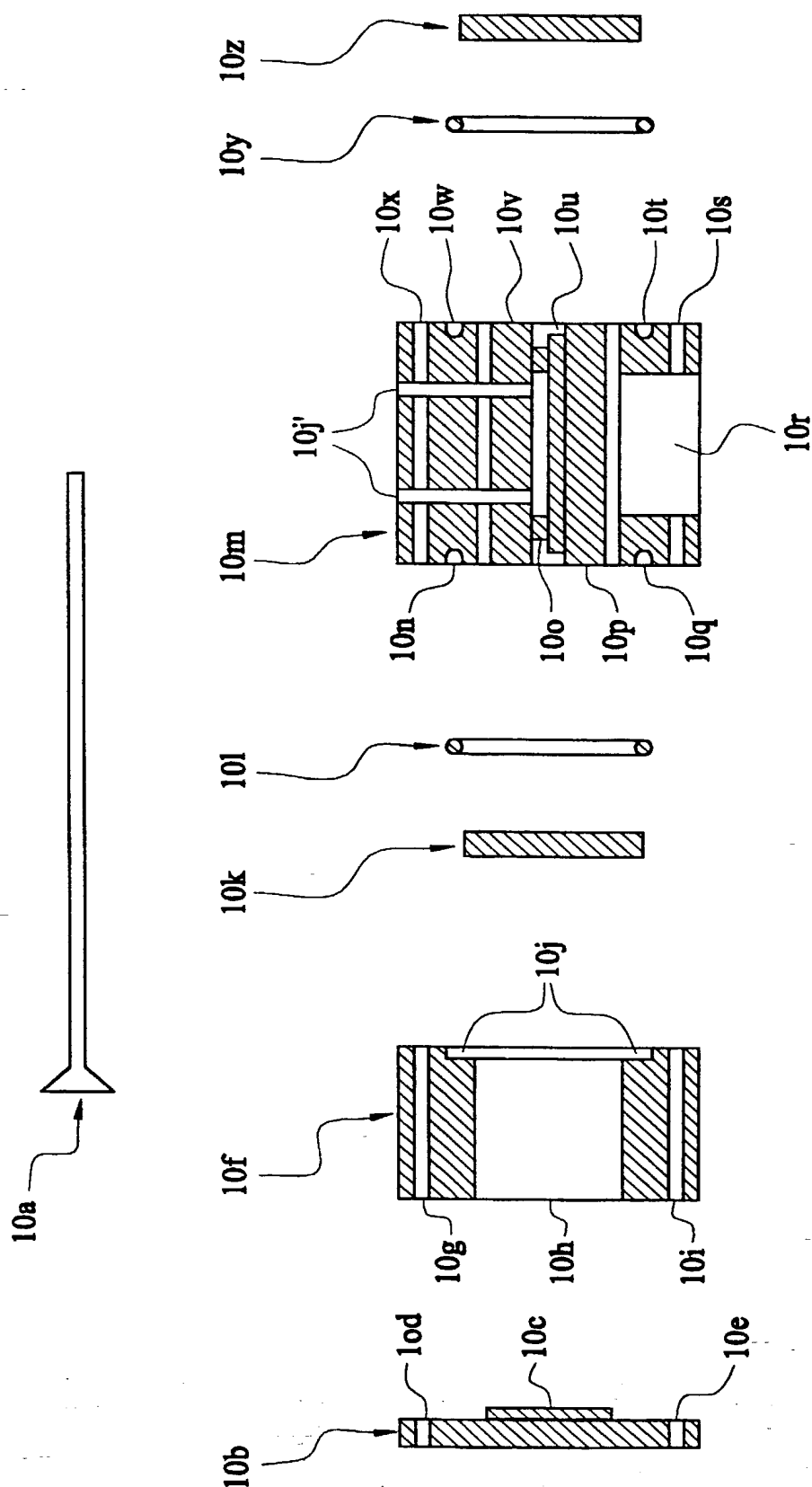
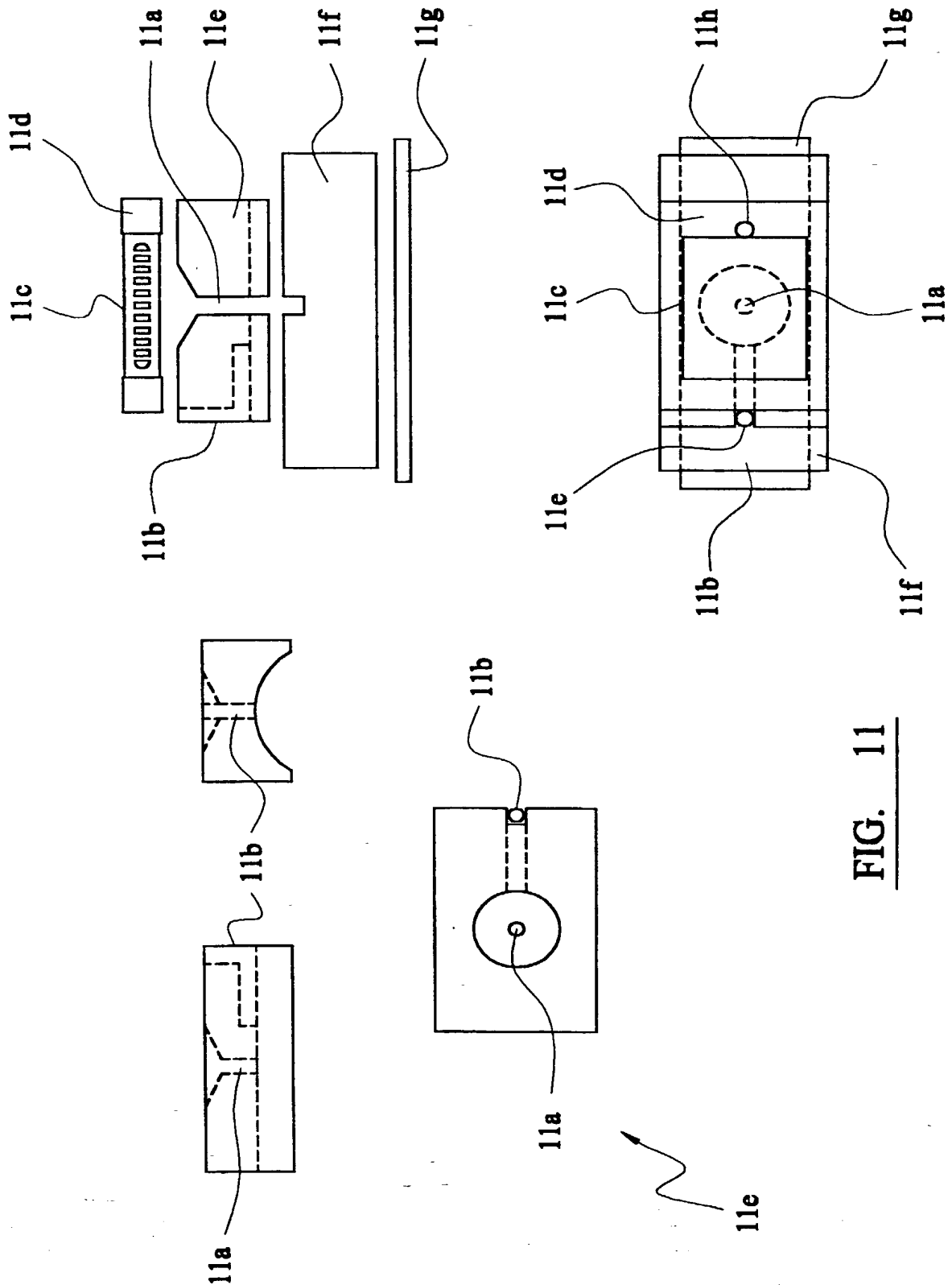
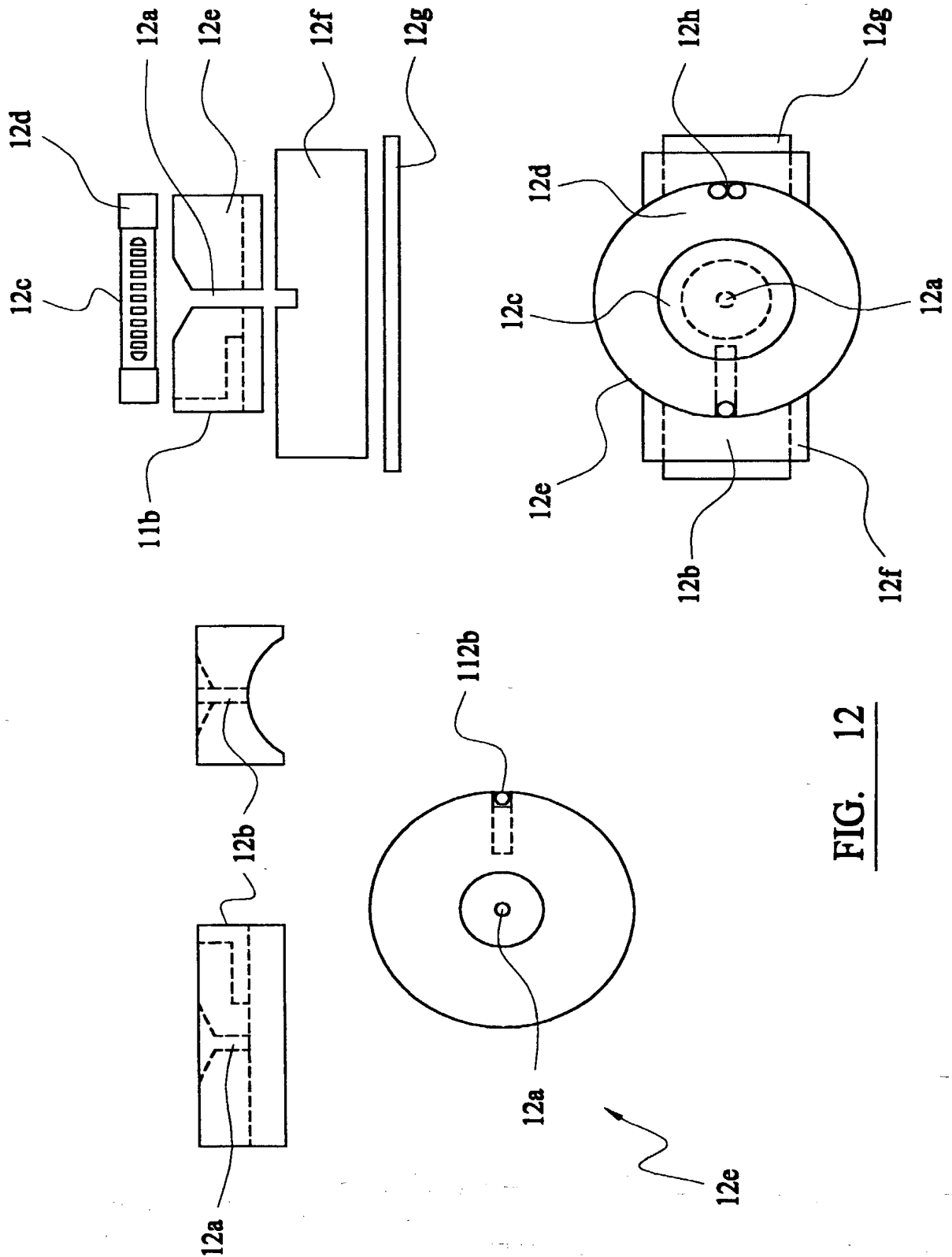


FIG. 10

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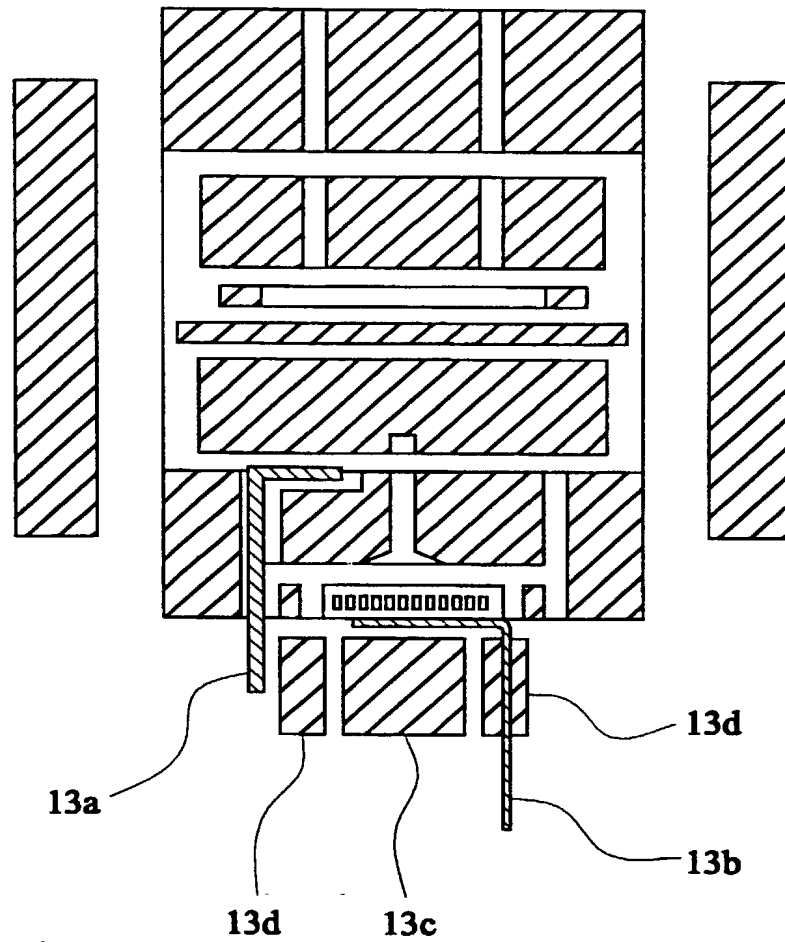


FIG. 13

FIG. 14(A)

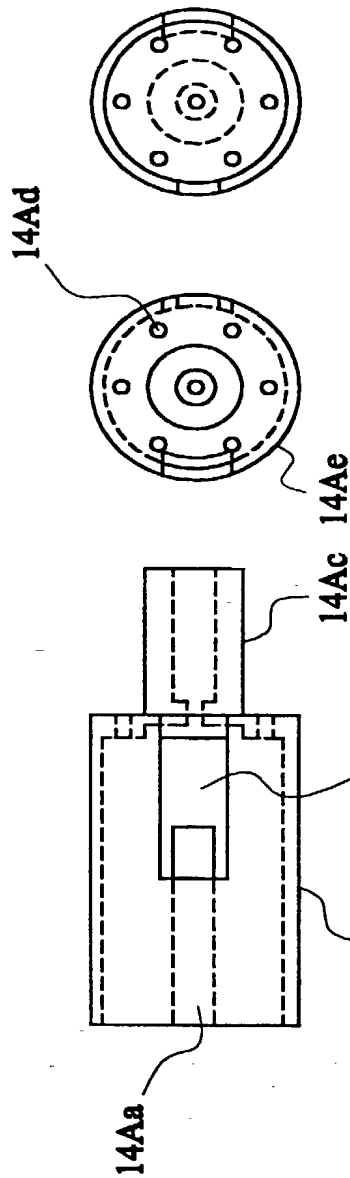


FIG. 14(B)

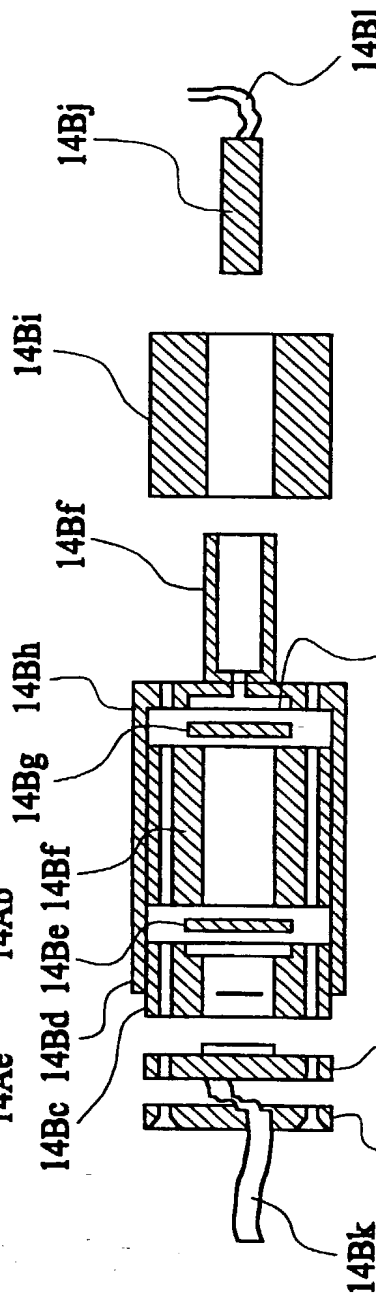
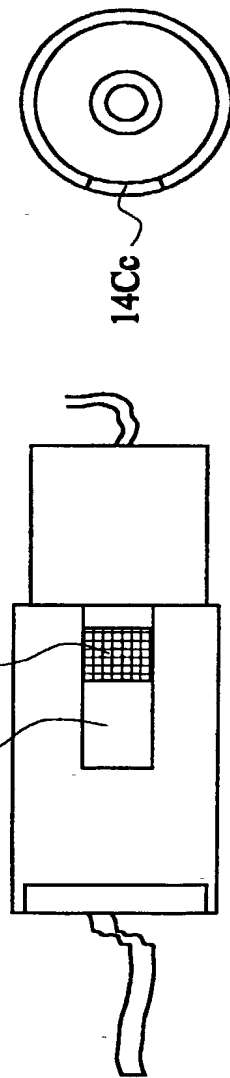
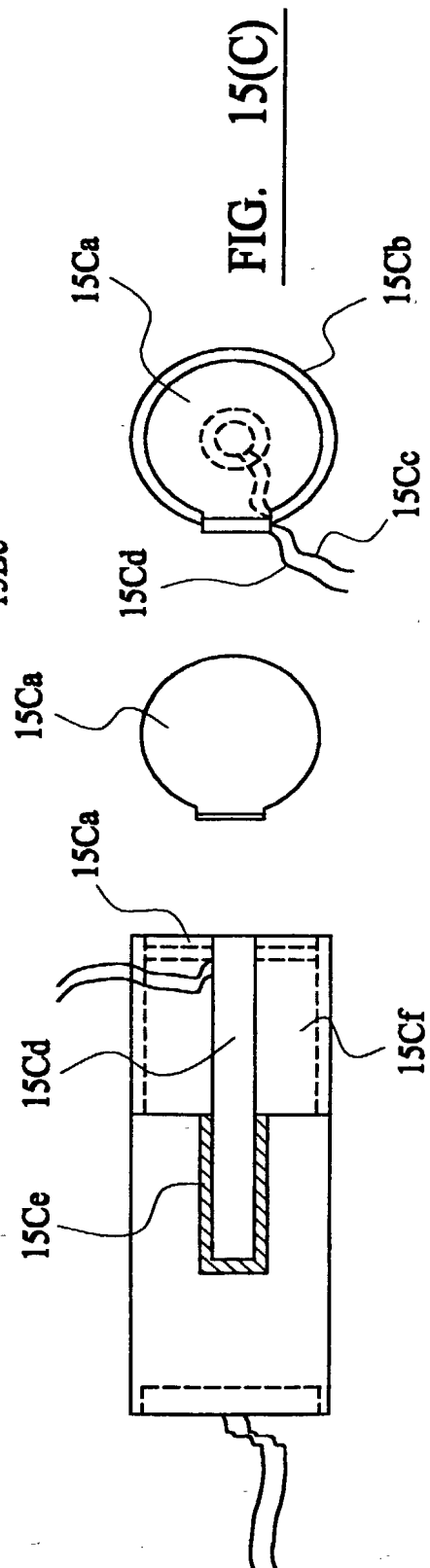
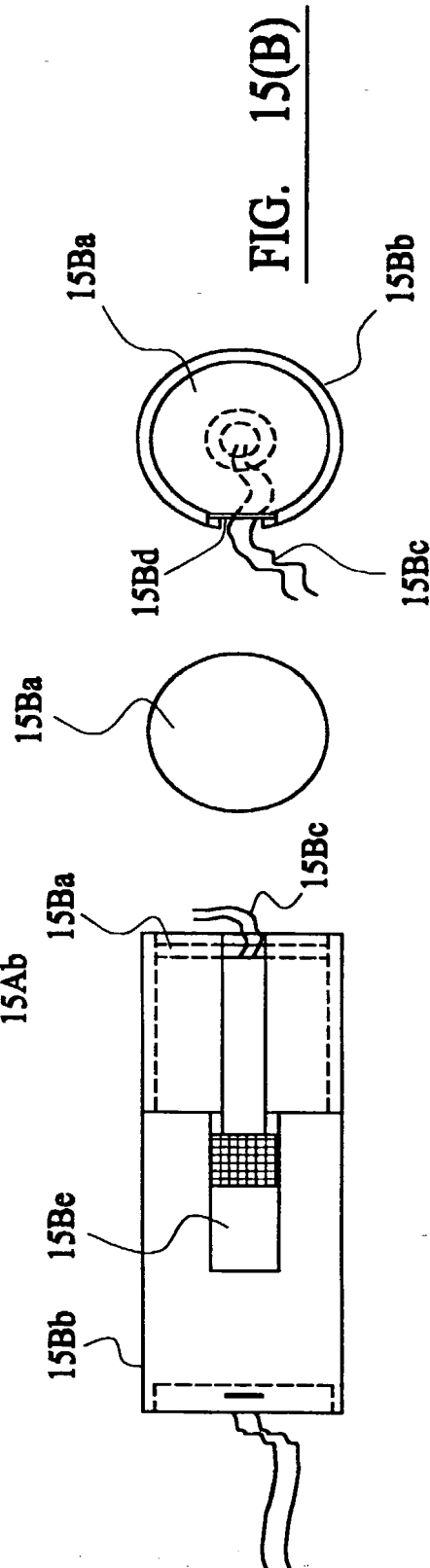
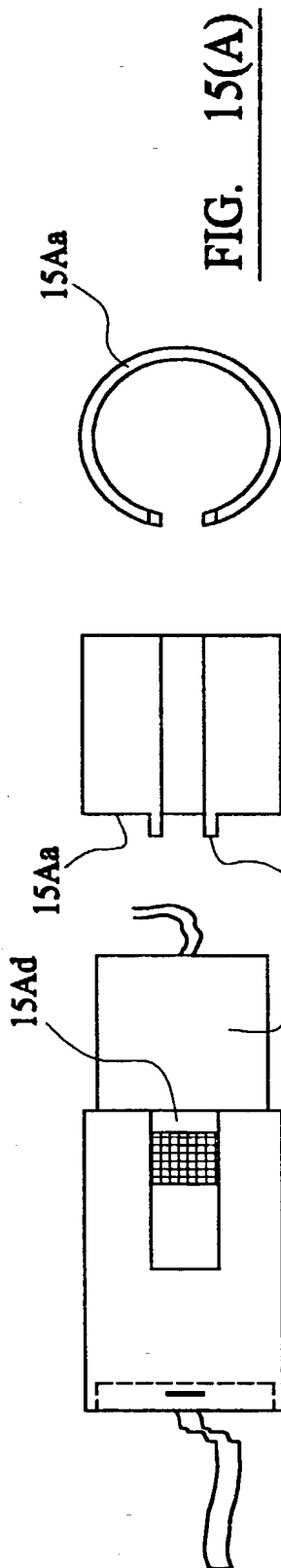


FIG. 14(C)







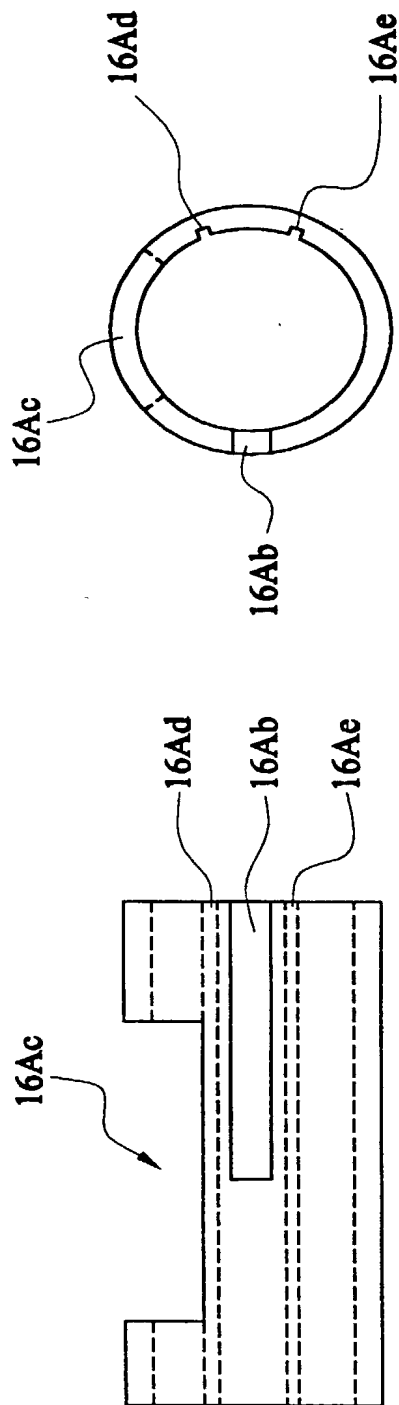


FIG. 16(A)

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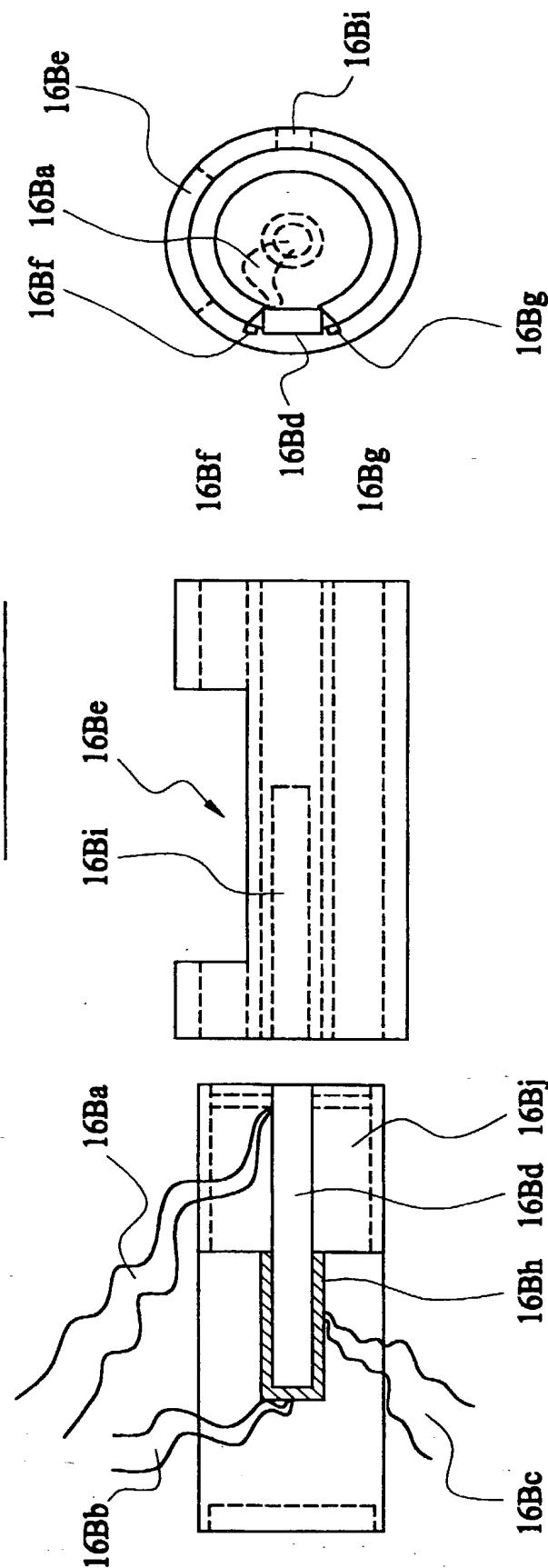


FIG. 16(B)

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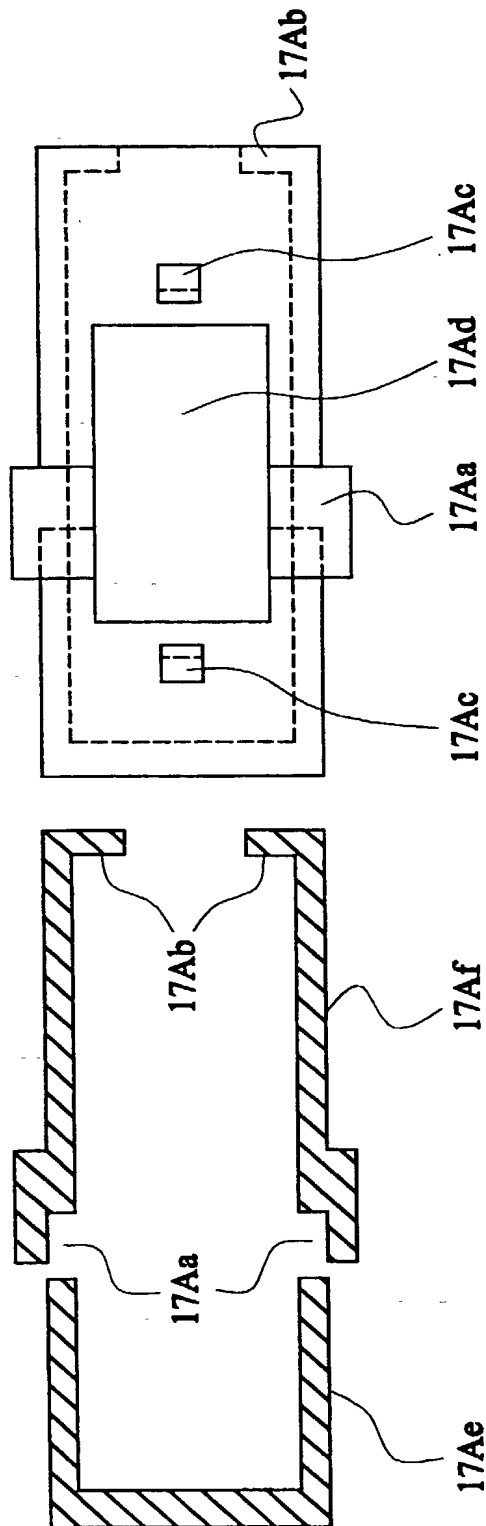


FIG. 17(A)

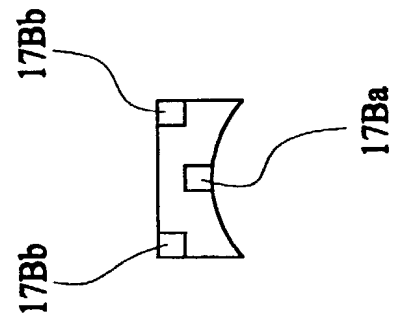
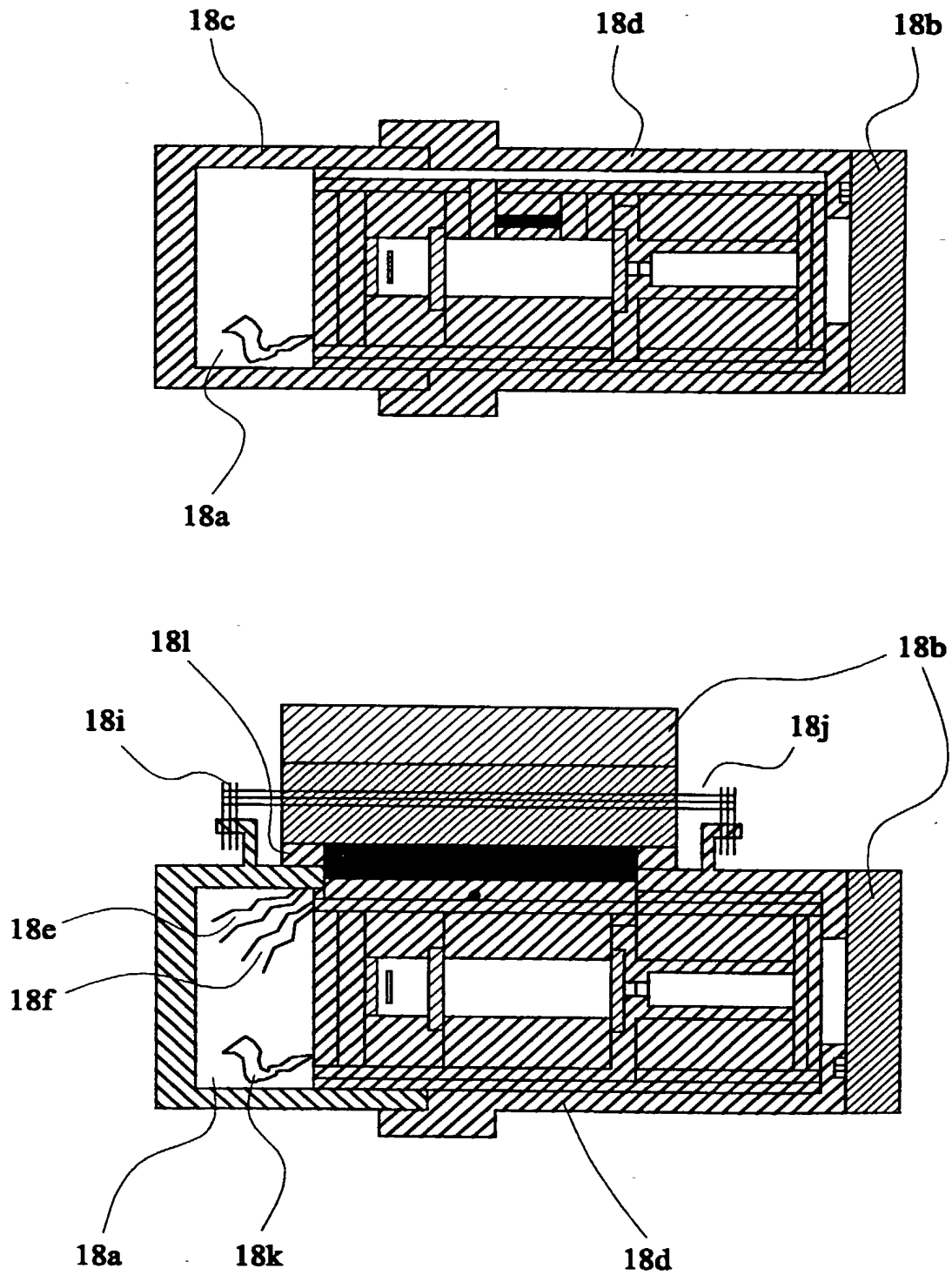


FIG. 17(B)

-17/17-



**FIG. 18**

**DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICANT AND  
POWER OF ATTORNEY**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, mailing address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I (we) believe we are the original, first and joint inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

**DEVICE FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED HOUSING OF A PLANAR OPTICAL COMPONENT** ✓  
the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on \_\_\_\_\_ as  
Application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_  
and was amended on \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable)

I (we) hereby state that we have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I (we) acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

\*\*\*\*\*

**PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S):**

☒ I (we) hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

9922601.1 ✓ (Number)	GB ✓ (Country)	24 September, 1999 ✓ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	Yes Priority Claimed
PCT/GB00/03635 ✓ (Number)	GB ✓ (Country)	22 September, 2000 ✓ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	Yes Priority Claimed
_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	Yes Priority Claimed

\*\*\*\*\*

**PRIOR U.S. APPLICATION(S):**

☐ I (we) hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I (we) acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which

occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)
(Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)
(Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)

\*\*\*\*\*

U.S. PROVISIONAL APPLICATION(S):

☐ I (we) hereby claim domestic priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119(e) of any provisional application(s) for patent listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I (we) acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior provisional application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

60/ (Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)
60/ (Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)
60/ (Application No.)	(Filing Date)	Pending (Status)

\*\*\*\*\*

I (we) hereby appoint the following as our representative(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith: STEPHEN H. CAGLE, Attorney (Reg. No. 26,445), and CARTER J. WHITE, Attorney (Reg. No. 41,374) each an attorney with the law firm of HOWREY SIMON ARNOLD & WHITE, LLP, as its attorney or agent so long as they remain with such law firm.

Address all telephone calls to:  
at telephone No. 713 268 1372

Carter J. White

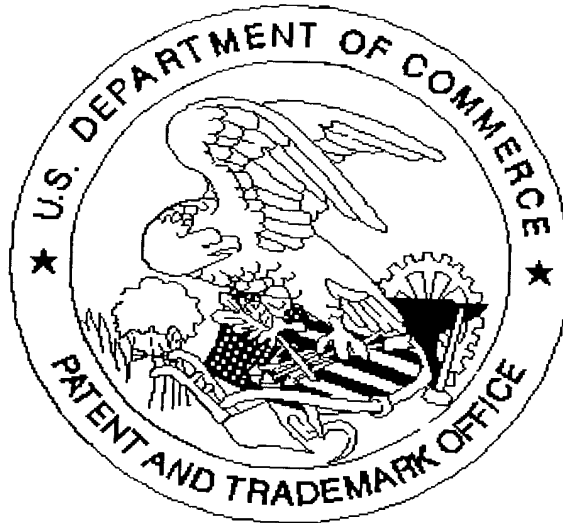
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